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17 December 1964

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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South Vietnam: The Buddhist leadership, while proceeding with its phased campaign against the Huong government, shows some willingness to engage in negotiations.

Tri Quang, the most influential of the Buddhist leaders currently arrayed against Huong, has indicated to US Embassy officials an interest in talking things over with Chief of State Suu and members of the High National Council.

Tam Chau, number two man in the Buddhist leadership, is reported to have expressed willingness to negotiate with the government and a hope that US officials would serve as intermediaries. Chau's reported terms for a settlement are removal of high Diemist officials from the government and setting a date for convocation of a national assembly.]

The Buddhists, in their successful campaign against the Diem regime, also showed themselves open to negotiations, which they invariably turned to their advantage. Although Tri Quang and the other Buddhist leaders may again be following the same strategy, it is just possible that they may have some doubts about their ability to generate broad popular support and, therefore, may be looking for a face-saving solution.

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Pakistan: President Ayub's campaign for re-election on 2 January is encountering a strong challenge from the combined opposition candidate, Miss Fatima Jinnah.

The votes will be cast by 80,000 electors who were chosen in country-wide balloting last month. They are not legally bound to vote for any specific candidate. [One of the more conservative opposition surveys estimates that Miss Jinnah will win about 55 percent of the votes.]

Before the badly divided opposition parties persuaded Miss Jinnah to be their joint candidate, prospects of unseating Ayub were considered hopeless. In recent weeks, however, the opposition's new found unity has encouraged more intense agitation against Ayub's six-year-old rule. Recent statements by bar and press associations criticizing the regime may have helped her, and widespread student demonstrations against the regime may impress the electors with the depth of hostility toward Ayub.

As both sides exert pressure on the electors in the next two weeks, Ayub has the advantage of commanding all the powers of the administration. This tips the scales in his favor, but the possibility of an upset victory by Miss Jinnah cannot be entirely discounted.

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NOTES

USSR-Congo: Moscow's expulsion of the Congolese chargé was a gesture to radical African opinion and probably does not presage imminent Soviet recognition of the rebel regime. The USSR has been exploiting recent events in the Congo by propaganda attacks on the West and tendentious reporting of the UN debates on the Stanleyville rescue operation. Moscow will probably continue to seek by these indirect means to erode the Western position in the Congo, but it is unlikely to become any more closely identified with the rebels unless their cause prospers and they receive recognition from a number of radical African states.

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*Cyprus: A Soviet ship unloaded about 100 Russian military trucks at Famagusta yesterday. Interior Minister Georkatzis says they are part of last July's Soviet-Cypriot commercial agreement. The Greek Cypriot leadership can be expected to exploit the delivery as a demonstration of continued Soviet backing.

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